

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Magi No.

DOE ___yes ___no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic GALESTOWN SURVEY DISTRICT

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Wheatley Church Road and Galestown-Reliance Road ___ not for publication

city, town Galestown ___ vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Dorchester

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Various Owners

street & number telephone no.:

city, town state and zip code

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dorchester County Courthouse liber

street & number High Street folio

city, town Cambridge state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

pository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. D-657

Condition

☐ excellent

☐ good

☐ fair

☐ deteriorated

☐ ruins

☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered

☐ altered

Check one

☐ original site

☐ moved

date of move

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

8. Significance

Survey No. D-657

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

THE HISTORY OF GALESTOWN

by

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Galestown, a small town in the northern part of Dorchester County, Maryland near the Maryland-Delaware border close to the Mason-Dixon line, was named for a certain Dr. Gales, one of its first citizens, or a member of the Gale Family. It may be impossible to trace the history of the exact naming of the town, but Dorchester County and Somerset County documents give great details of the lives and contributions of the Gale Family, which was directly related to George Washington. Levin Gale served as Chief Justice, which may have a great significance in the name of the town.

Galestown was settled along a creek bearing the name Gales Creek. More than a century ago, three boats, "The Fair Trader," "The Reddie," and "The Method," were built on Gales Creek. Among the oldest deeds in the possession of a Galestown resident is a deed dated April 17, 1714 for a tract of land known as "Harper's Adventure" which joins the property now occupied by Mrs. David L. Wheatley and her daughter, Nancy. There is also evidence that the Galestown area was at one time Indian territory.

Among the earliest business establishments in Galestown was a large grain mill on the site of the Galestown Millpond. The mill flourished because the community grew up to serve the needs of the large agricultural area. The old mill was operated by a water wheel controlled by a system of gates that opened and closed. One old mill, owned by Walter Hastings, at that time, burned in approximately 1912 and was replaced with a new one.

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In 1924, the mill was sold to Robert Records and T. E. Smoot for the sum of \$5,450 at a public auction. Members of the Wheatley, Bell, Hastings, Records, Nelson, and Darby families have served as miller. The mill remained in operation until sometime in the late 1940's and finally torn down in the late 1960's or early 1970's.

Also nearby was another mill, a sawmill with the great saw moving up and down. It should be noted here that while the two mills were in close proximity, the grain mill operated on fresh water and the sawmill on salt water. In the early 1900's lumbering was also a big industry in the area. Small boats were loaded with a half-cord of wood and they would carry the wood to the river where it was loaded onto larger vessels at the end of Galestown Village. The area of the mills was once all water. There were great open spaces which have now filled with marsh and swamp vegetation. Tuckahoes, ironweed, and jopied flowers along with great patches of water lilies make these areas rich with beauty.

Among the oldest homes in Galestown are the homes of Miss Louise Hastings and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hughes. Miss Hastings's homes dates back to the early 1800's and has parts put together with wooden pegs and a chimney that has evidence of being built with slave labor. The Hughes's home also dates back to the early 1800's.

The Byrd Truitt Farm now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Earl Tull Jr., prior to the Civil War, was one of the places where Patty Cannon chained slaves to await shipment to the South. In the old barn now torn down and replaced were the staples to which the slaves were chained. It was in that barn that Joe King shot and killed Ebenezer Johnson. On "Tick Island" a

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short distance from the farm, slaves were chained to ^{trees} with staples or bolts. According to Ted Giles, author of "Patty Cannon - Woman of Mystery", he and Elijah Wheedleton searched the area around 1963 and at that time could not find any trees that were one hundred and thirty years old.

Several stores and business establishments existed in Galestown during the mid and late 1800's and early 1900's. Among the earliest merchants in Galestown, if not the original, were Thomas Jackson Russell and John Collins. There are records to prove Mr. Russell was a merchant as early as 1841. Some of the early merchants were members of the Brinsfield, Russell, Bowman, Collins, and Wright families. The stores in Galestown served the needs of the people before modern transportation changed the shopping habits of the public. My own father used to like to recall receiving his first childhood toy from a Mr. Brinsfield's store in Galestown. At one time there was an oyster house operated by Mann (Picky) Eskridge. Miss Louise Hastings recalls a Mr. Bud Lowe operating a jewelry repair shop in his home in the early 1900's as well as a barber shop operated by Mr. William Wheatley.

At one time there was a general repair shop operated by George Jones. Mr. Jones, better known to residents of that time as "Squire Jones" was a wheelwright. He repaired wagons, worked as a blacksmith, and also made caskets. A number of food processing plants have operated in Galestown. The Ross, Fluharty, Neal, and Bramble Plants processed tomatoes and other vegetables. The canning house closed all operation in 1959 and was last managed by Mr. Atlas Bramble. Mr. Edgar Calloway managed the canning house for a number of years. In the 1920's, there was a shirt factory in Galestown operated by Lynn Mann of Sharptown.

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Galestown residents taking part in the Civil War were Zora Lankford, William Lankford, William P. Walston, and William Hurtle. Mr. Walston, born August 16, 1838, died October 17, 1898 and is buried in the old Galestown cemetery beside the church. I was informed that Mr. Zora Lankford is buried in the old graveyard on a farm near Galestown presently owned by Harold Eskridge.

The Atlas of 1877 lists the following residents of the area with their land holdings.

James M. Gordy - 400 acres - Farmer from Sussex, Delaware
settled in 1863.
Perry G. Hackett - 400 acres - Farmer settled in 1818.
Sorin M. Gordy, - Teacher from Sussex, Del. settled in 1863.
John W. Payne - Teacher - Settled in 1845.
William L. Smoot - 95 acres, Farmer settled in 1843.
J. J. Truitt - 364 acres - Farmer settled in 1838.
A. B. Truitt - 150 acres - Farmer settled in 1845.
Captain C. Vincent - 1181 acres - settled in 1834.
Jesse K. Wheatley - 280 acres - Farmer settled in 1822.
T. T. Wheatley - Merchant - Settled in 1842.
A. T. Wheatley - 200 acres - Farmer settled in 1820.

A post office operated in Galestown until rural delivery replaced it in 1908. The village of Galestown has been served with rural delivery from Delaware since 1908, a fact that today's bureaucrats find confusing. Having a Seaford, Delaware address requires explaining to bureaucrats especially when one goes to get a Social Security card or a car title or registration card. However, after reviewing the matter for a year, the U. S. Postal Service now agrees with Galestown residents that it is in their best interests to retain mail delivery from and a mailing address of Seaford, Delaware. The early postmasters of Galestown were Joseph H. Bell, E. W. Bell, and Samuel T. Collins.

The Galestown School, which has been converted into two homes,

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originally had grades one through eight. Only a few children went on to high school in nearby Sharptown (1914). Some of the well remembered teachers from those early years were Miss Anna Collins, Miss Agnes Collins, Miss Blanche LeCompte, Miss Mary Hurlock, Miss Nellie James, Miss Lydia Gullette, Miss Katie Oliphant, Miss Emma Caulk, Miss Louise Hastings, Miss Mary Hummer Wootten and many other local ladies. Miss Louise is proud of the fact that the Galestown area has produced 50 teachers with Galestown proper having 26 of them. Galestown School closed in the 1940's with the children then transferred by bus to Hurlock and Eldorado. Now all children in Galestown travel by bus to elementary school in Hurlock or high school at Shiloh near Hurlock.

Galestown Methodist Episcopal Church was organized and ministered to by Rev. James Carroll. The church was dedicated February 1, 1880 and cost \$1,200. An earlier church had been erected in 1855 and was torn down and replaced with the present one. The land for the church was deeded from Joseph H. Bell and wife to John Collins and James T. Wallace in 1854. Evidently there was a lapse in church life due to the fact that it had to be reorganized in 1880. The church was remodeled inside in 1965 and dedicated April 2, 1967 by Rev. Paul McCoy, District Superintendent and Rev. Milton Elliott.

In 1970 Galestown United Methodist Church became part of the Sharptown Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church Charge and the current pastor is Rev. Alfred E. Taylor who has been pastor here since 1975 after graduating from Boston Theological Seminary. Rev. Taylor is a native of West Virginia.

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The parsonage for Galestown United Methodist Church was built in 1872, the land being given by Mr. Jobe Russell. The parsonage house no longer serves as the residence of Galestown's minister and is presently unoccupied.

The Galestown Community House was built in the 1930's when a Rev. Mr. Sharp was pastor of the church. Today the community house serves as a meeting place for various church-related activities and suppers.

In the early years of the Twentieth Century, Galestown grew many tomatoes, watermelons, and cantaloupes. In those days there were no migratory workers. The members of the families picked the fruit and vegetables. Buyers came from Baltimore and bought whole patches of watermelons from the farmers. The farmers still had to cut the melons and loaded them ^{for} ~~for~~ Baltimore delivery at Truitt's Wharf. Cantaloupes were picked and packed in carriers and taken by horse-drawn vehicles to commission markets in Seaford, Delaware where they were loaded on freight cars and transported to northern cities. Strawberries were also a very important product of the area.

The late Dr. Edwin R. Osler, a general practitioner from Pennsylvania, came to Galestown in 1880 and practiced medicine in Galestown for almost fifty years. The late Theophilus T. Wheatley (grandfather of Miss Louise Hastings) served a Sheriff of Dorchester County while the late John M. Hastings (also grandfather of Miss Louise Hastings) served as a Delegate from Dorchester County in the Maryland Legislature. The late Samuel Smoot served as a Dorchester County Commissioner.

While the community church and school served as social institutions of the area during the early 1900's, still another important organization

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came into being during this time. Every community is not just composed of people but most of the time, there are certain organizations which help make the community a place which is better known. Rescue Lodge \$ 155 Independent Order of Odd Fellows was a part of the Galestown community for 75 years, being instituted October 19, 1913. The Independent Order of Odd Fellows is a world-wide organization under one head. There are lodges in every state of the union and many foreign countries. The Motto of Odd Fellowship is to visit the sick, Relieve the distressed, educate the orphans, and bury the dead. The Fraternal symbols are three links and an Open Bible. All these teachings are based upon the Bible. It supports Homes for Aged Members in most states and foreign countries and provides loans to worthy students to complete their education. It has a Research Chair of Eye Research at John Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. Although Rescue Lodge \$ 155 was a small lodge, yet one former member, Emerson Plummer, became Grand Master of the State of Maryland. One of its recent members, Roger Wheedleton, was Grand Patriarch of the Grand Encampment, which is a branch of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. Due to decling membership and interest, Rescue Lodge \$ 155 officially disbanded in 1978 and remaining members trandferred to the Federalsburg chapter.

The present road through Galestown is not the same one that was in use in 1850. Before it was moved, the road more or less followed Gales Creek. The road was changed to its present location in 1855. Later it was covered with oyster shells and still later with a macadam surface.

More modern ways of living were beginning to make their debut in Galestown when telephones were introduced in the community in 1909. Electricity came to Galestown in 1915 mainly through the efforts of local citizens building the first electric line which was later sold to Eastern Shore Public Service.

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However, the rural area surrounding Galestown did not get electricity until 1941 when the R.E.A. line was completed.

Since then, the little community of Galestown has not changed much in size or stature except for the addition of another industry, Delaware Sand and Gravel Company, about 1939 which no longer is in existence. The company was sold to Gray Brothers about 1939 and evidently heirs of the Gray Brothers still own the land.

The town of Galestown was officially incorporated in 1950 with the first town commissioners being Walter J. Brady, William Collison, and Rose Bialk. The people elect three town commissioners for two-year terms each. Town elections are held every two years on the first Monday in June. The commissioner receiving the largest number of votes becomes the Mayor. The present town commissioners are: John H. Lankford (President and Mayor - 1983-1985): Rev. John B. Wooten - (Secretary - 1983-1985): and Edgar Ryle - (Treasurer - 1983-1985). The commissioners adapted new charter amendments to the Galestown town charter March 20, 1974 and adapted the initial town tax January 1, 1976. The commissioners have been considering adapting building codes and permits.

Today, Galestown is a small rural community with a population of approximately 125 people. The picturesque Galestown Millpond provides a beautiful setting for swimmers and boating enthusiasts with small boats and is certainly a fisherman's paradise. The local store, owned and operated by Mr. and Mrs. Elijah Wheedleton, specializes in fresh seafood for sale.

The Galestown Ruritan Club was chartered in May, 1978. The charter members were Jack Wheatley, Thomas Wheatley, Jackson Bradshaw, Paul Calloway,

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Alph Massey, Randall Marine, Harold Eskridge, William Eskridge Sr., Gary Cumberledge, John H. Lankford, William Eskridge Jr., Eddie Wheatley, Mike Wheatley, Brooks Wheatley, Rev. Alfred E. Taylor, and Robert Worden. The club's first officers were President: Jack Wheatley; Vice-President: Thomas Wheatley; Secretary: William Eskridge, Sr.; and Treasurer: Brooks Wheatley. At present, there are 22 members in the club.

Ruritan is a civic organization dedicated to community service whose objective is to bring about a closer social union between the farmers, the business, and professional people in a community in order to make it a better place in which to live.

A Ruritan Club is patterned after some of the service clubs we are familiar with in cities and town, but it is designed to help meet the needs of all cities, town, and rural communities.

Founded in 1929 in Holland, Virginia, Ruritans have grown to be the sixth largest civic organization in America. Membership in a local Ruritan Club includes workers in agriculture, business, and various other professional as well as community leaders.

The purpose is for the membership to be representative of the citizenship of the community in which it functions. The chief aim of Ruritan are (1) to create a better understanding between people, communities, and business; (2) to aid in charitable work; (3) to promote industrial and agricultural growth; and (4) to encourage the highest kind of education. Everything a Ruritan Club does is motivated by the desire to make the community a better place in which to live.

A major activity of the Galestown Ruritan Club is its annual Old-Timers Day held the fourth Saturday of September at the Sharptown carnival grounds

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parking lot. This is a fun-day for the whole family with exhibits, flea markets, plenty of food, and pony cart rides for the children.

Their annual Ladies Night Banquet is held in February at which time members receive membership attendance pins and other special awards they may have earned.

Frank Allen of the Galestown Ruritan Club currently serves as Zone Governor for Zone 5 Ruritan Clubs of which the Galestown Ruritan Club is a part.

The Galestown Ruritan Club meets the first Monday evening of each month and the members are served a dinner provided by the United Methodist Women of Galestown United Methodist Church.

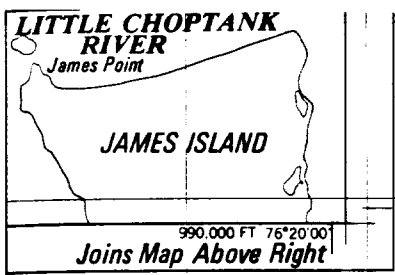
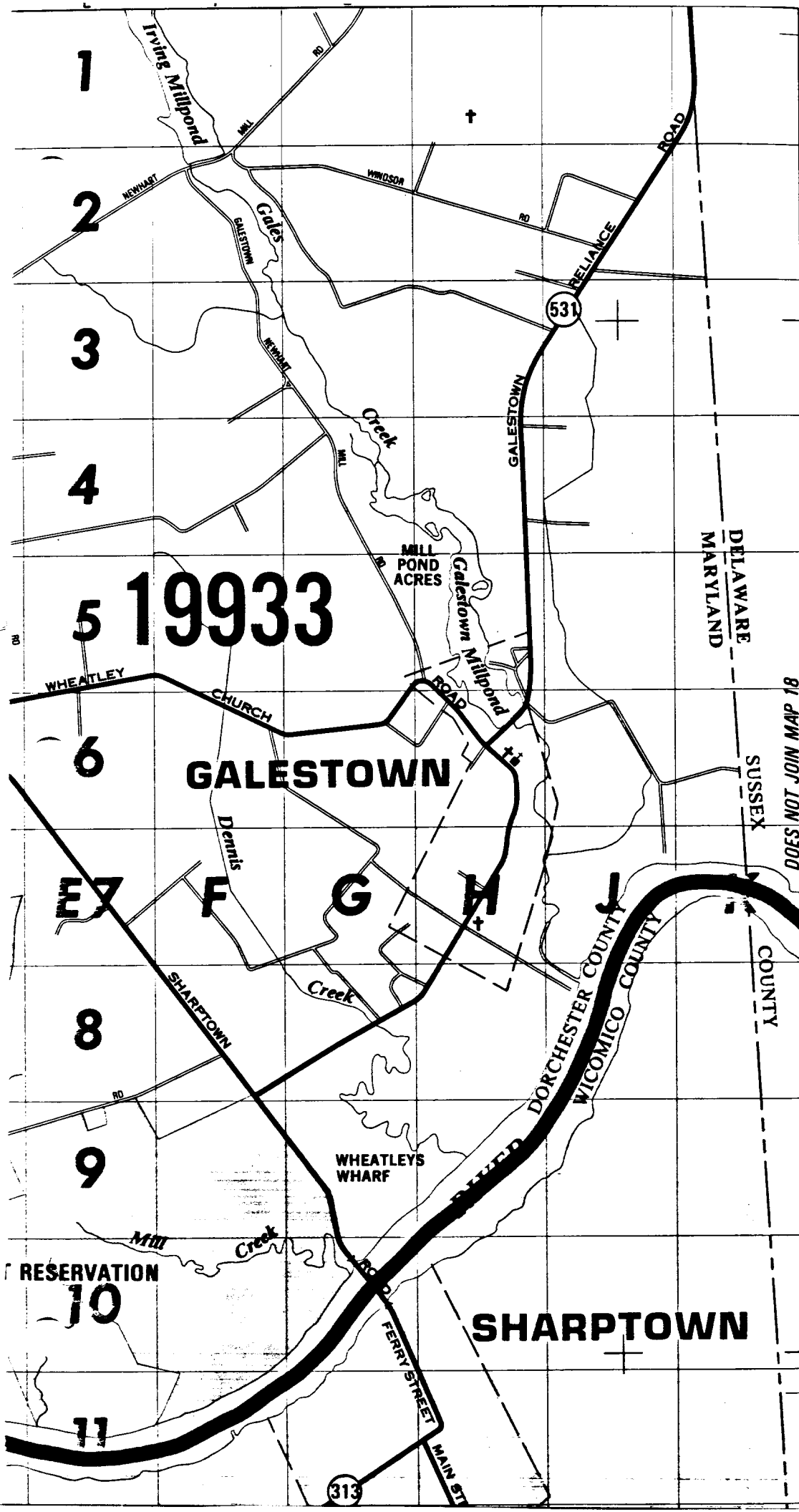
In 1983 the residents of Galestown still maintain many of what are considered old-fashioned moral virtues of their forefathers and will normally provide a helping hand when a fellow citizen is in need. The citizens will also stick together to defeat anyone or anything trying to make drastic changes that would adversely affect their peaceful, rural way of life in their community. This fact was most recently put to the test in 1981 when the citizens of Galestown and its surrounding area banded together to fight the postal service's attempt to change their Route 3, Seaford, Delaware address to Route 1, Rhodesdale, Maryland which all felt would adversely affect the quality of their mail service.

Galestown holds a special place in many people's hearts because although people may move away, they often retain their friendships with Galestown people and come back to special services at Galestown United Methodist Church. Galestown is a caring community that reaches out and touches people in the spirit of the Lord and most people who live there find it a pleasant place to live.



LAKE, GRIFFING & STEVENSON, 1877

D-657



D-657
GALESTOWN

CHESAPEAKE

A B C

Joins Map Below Right 1,000,000 FT

TAYLORS
ISLAND

21669

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